

ABSTRACT

5 A method of creating an image utilising a table of levels known as a "level
activation table" (34) is disclosed. The method uses the level activation table to optimally
evaluate a given compositing expression such that the number of pixel operations needed
to evaluate the expression is minimised. The method determines the smallest regions in
which compositing operations need to be performed and uses these regions to produce the
level activation tables where clipping is applied to operations in order to avoid redundant
10 and/or incorrect pixel operations. The method is preferably used in a compositing model
in which objects are composited onto a page using a stack machine and an associated
compositing stack (38). The stack 38 may be manipulated using standard stack operations
such as *push*, *pull* and *pop*. Instructions for the stack machine are taken from the level
activation table 34.

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